

Homeless Link 7-minute briefings

These briefings are intended to be short, snappy break-downs of reports, practice guidance, case studies and briefings. This briefing provides an overview of actions taken by Oldham Council to respond to and prevent Care Leavers risk of homelessness, and includes challenges faced and key learning.

7. What works

Escalation to commissioners and Adult Social Care for accommodation options where young people have intersecting needs

Focus on why placements break down and on a young person's aspirations from the outset. This enables teams to resolve any suitability issues and reach the young person's accommodation 'end goal' as quickly as possible.

<https://www.oldham.gov.uk/careleavers>

6. What works

Effective communication and joint working between Housing and After has led to a strong multi-disciplinary team approach around the young person bringing in other services appropriate to their needs if required.

Appropriate and flexible accommodation placements – for example the spot purchasing of provision and use of emergency/respite beds if needed

1. Background

Young people who have left care are particularly vulnerable to homelessness even where they are initially provided accommodation. Young people talk about 'the drop' in support when they transition into adult services, and challenges in navigating complex systems. They may not be ready for independent

2. The problem

Oldham Council saw an increase in the number of care experienced 21+ year olds presenting to the housing department. Older care leavers 21-25 aren't in automatic priority need and may be classed as intentionally homeless if they were unable to sustain their tenancy. This places them at risk of rough sleeping and/or hidden homelessness.

3. Actions taken

In 2019 Oldham Council pledged that the council would always provide a home for looked after children and care leavers, where they would feel safe and secure. To achieve this the following changes were proposed to

- the Cabinet:
- 1) that no care leaver would be found as intentionally homeless
 - 2) that automatic priority need would be extended for care leavers from 21 to 25.

These changes were agreed and implemented. Read the [report to Cabinet here](#)



5. Outcomes

Barriers removed for young people to access support. Young people, and their social workers or personal advisors are more aware of what support is available, how they can access it and what it will look like. Consequently they are more likely to ask for help earlier, before the point of crisis

Outcomes

A shared agenda as corporate parents. All departments recognise their responsibilities and roles as corporate parents and take action.

Better joint working and a streamlined process: improved relationships across the Housing and the After Care Team and a simplified assessment process means it is quicker for all staff to provide effective support for care leavers at risk of becoming homeless and achieve positive outcomes.